



April 9, 2010

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The Honorable Nestor Garcia, Chair
and Members of the Budget Committee
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Fax: 527-6910

Re: Bill 15 CD1

Dear Budget Committee Chair Garcia and Council Members:

I urge you to maintain the Mayor's Office of Economic Development and not enact these drastic budget cuts. OED is important to my organization because it provides key services that we depend on.

Working with OED for several years, we have developed meaningful programs both in Honolulu and in Naha, Okinawa. This year marks the 50th anniversary of our sister city relationship between the City and County of Honolulu and the City of Naha.

Without the support of OED we would not be able to plan events such as an International Hula Festival that will promote both Honolulu and Naha this year. We expect 3-5 thousand attendees at this first annual event.

OED provides support targeted at the local Oahu community. These needs are not being met by state agencies. Given the economic challenges faced by our community, OED has been able to leverage its modest level of funding with public private partnerships that have enriched the economic well being of our county. I urge you to maintain the Mayors Office of Economic Development.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Sincerely,

Isaac Hokama
Co-Chairman
Honolulu-Naha 50th Anniversary Sister
City Committee